DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 452 412 CE 081 696

TITLE	Developing a Framework of Work-Based Foundation Skills.
INSTITUTION	Pennsylvania State Univ., University Park. Inst. for the Study of Adult Literacy.
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	6p.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://www.paworkforce.state.pa.us/implementation/download/framew ork_working_paper.pdf.
PUB TYPE	Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Basic Education; *Adult Learning; *Basic Skills; Competence; Competency Based Education; Definitions; *Education Work Relationship; Educational Needs; Educational Practices; Employment Potential; *Employment Qualifications; Individualized Instruction; Job Skills; Labor Force Development; Lifelong Learning; Literacy Education; Models; Needs Assessment; Program Development; Program Implementation; Statewide Planning; Student Certification; Systems Approach
IDENTIFIERS	*Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT

The Framework of Work Based Foundation Skills Project was undertaken to facilitate development of Pennsylvania's new workforce investment system Team PA CareerLink by identifying and developing common definitions of the foundation skills all workers need to function effectively in any workplace. A framework of 19 work-based foundation skills and knowledge with component subskills was developed through a comprehensive synthesis and comparison of state and national work-based foundation skills efforts. The skills identified included basic workplace skills, basic employability skills, and basic organizational knowledge (core knowledge about the nature of work and workplace organizations). The framework included links to assessment systems and instruments capable of measuring the foundation skills and links to Occupational Skills Standards to illustrate applications of skills in specific industry clusters. Once development of the unified framework is finalized, it will help practitioners accomplish the following things: design and implement competency-based curricula that are meaningful for workers; develop individualized education plans to meet learners' education and employment goals; link work-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment; reflect on current instructional and assessment practices and develop program improvement plans related to workplace education; and use a common framework and understanding of work-based foundation skills when working with new workforce investment system partners. (MN)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 452 412

DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK OF WORK-BASED FOUNDATION SKILLS

As diverse agencies and organizations begin to work together to develop and implement Pennsylvania's new workforce investment system—TeamPA *CareerLink*—all partners must speak the same language and have a common understanding of the system's activities. Although the term "basic skills" is used freely and often within the system, a common definition and understanding of what they are and how they are measured does not exist. *The Framework of Work-Based Foundation Skills Project* will meet this need through a collaborative process to identify and develop common definitions of the basic—or *foundation*—skills and knowledge that all workers need to function effectively in any workplace. The project is funded by the Bureau of ABLE's State Leadership Initiative under Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State is leading the project with the assistance of a project team which includes ABLE providers involved in workplace foundation skills education and representatives from the Bureau of ABLE, the Human Resources Investment Council (HRIC), workers and employers. The framework consists of:

- **nineteen work-based foundation skills and knowledge with component sub-skills;**
- **links to assessment systems and instruments capable of measuring the foundation skills;**
- **links to Occupational Skills Standards to illustrate applications of the skills in specific industry clusters, such as manufacturing, retail sales, and health care.**

The project is also investigating how other states and countries have developed and used interim basic skills certificates to validate an individual's skills and knowledge at pre-GED competency levels. Based on this research, recommendations will be made to the Bureau on the feasibility of using interim basic skills certificates in Pennsylvania.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CE 051 696

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State
PH: 814-863-3777 FX: 814-863-6108 EM: psc3@psu.edu

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
E.N. Askov
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

WHAT ARE THE WORK-BASED FOUNDATION SKILLS?

Work-based foundation skills are the core skills and knowledge that all workers need to function effectively and safely in any workplace. They are essential to effective performance in a broad range of jobs and are portable across workplaces. The foundation skills are relevant for all emerging, transitional, and incumbent workers, including individuals learning English as a second language (ESL) or with special needs. Workers integrate and apply these skills and knowledge to successfully complete work tasks, work with others, manage their work environment, and plan and direct personal and professional growth.

Pursuit of Lifelong Learning, which includes knowing how to learn and apply new skills and knowledge, represents the foundation or core of the framework and is essential for helping individuals understand the vital connection between educational attainment, employment, and career advancement. *Basic Workplace Skills* are the applied academic skills, including those that are traditionally thought of as basic (i.e., reading, writing, math) as well as those that are rapidly becoming essential in today's workplace (i.e., using technology). *Basic Employability Skills* are the cognitive, personal, and interpersonal skills needed to interact appropriately within the workplace as well as advance to new positions and responsibilities. They include the skills needed to work in teams, solve problems, make decisions, and develop effective self-management strategies (such as managing stress). *Basic Organizational Knowledge* represents the core knowledge that every worker should have about the nature of work and workplace organizations, such as health and safety procedures and an understanding of the workplace culture. In short, the framework illustrates the range of skills and knowledge that all workers need for success in the workplace. Of course, individual workplaces or specific jobs may require certain skills and knowledge components more than others, but helping learners develop all of these skills and knowledge ensures the portability of skills that will be so essential in the future.

Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State
PH: 814-863-3777 FX: 814-863-6108 EM: psc3@psu.edu

The foundation skills and knowledge were identified via a comprehensive synthesis and comparison of state and national work-based foundation skills efforts. These included the Bureau of ABLE's adult learner skills competencies (Van Horn, 1998), PA's K-12 academic standards, selected ABLE-funded 353 workplace projects (Gacka, 1998), Southwest PA's National Governor's Association Incumbent Worker Learning Demonstration Grants, National Institute for Literacy's *Equipped for the Future*, SCANS, and the National Occupational Skill Standards reports. Based on this research, component sub-skills and competencies are also being identified for each of the foundation skills. They will be organized from simple to complex and divided into three levels (basic, intermediate, and advanced) to mirror the traditional division of ABLE programs (grade equivalents 0-4, 5-8, and 9-12).

HOW CAN ABLE PROVIDERS USE THE FRAMEWORK?

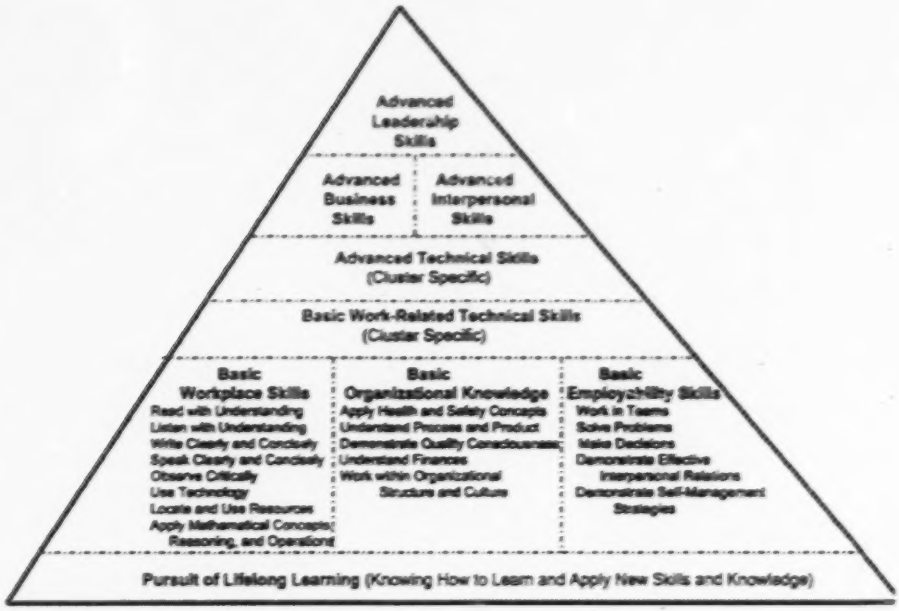
As the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 becomes reality, ABLE programs are being asked to broaden their program vision, adopt continuous program improvement processes, and work with new partners to ensure their viability within PA's workforce investment system, Team PA *CareerLink*. The unified framework can help practitioners:

- **design and implement competency-based curricula that are meaningful for workers;**
- **develop individualized education plans to meet learners' education/employment goals;**
- **link work-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment;**
- **link work-based foundation skills programs with occupational skill standards;**
- **reflect on current instructional and assessment practices and develop program improvement plans related to workplace education;**
- **use a common framework and understanding of work-based foundation skills when working with new workforce investment system partners.**

Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State
PH: 814-863-3777 FX: 814-863-6108 EM: psc3@psu.edu

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WORK-BASED FOUNDATION SKILLS MODEL ONE



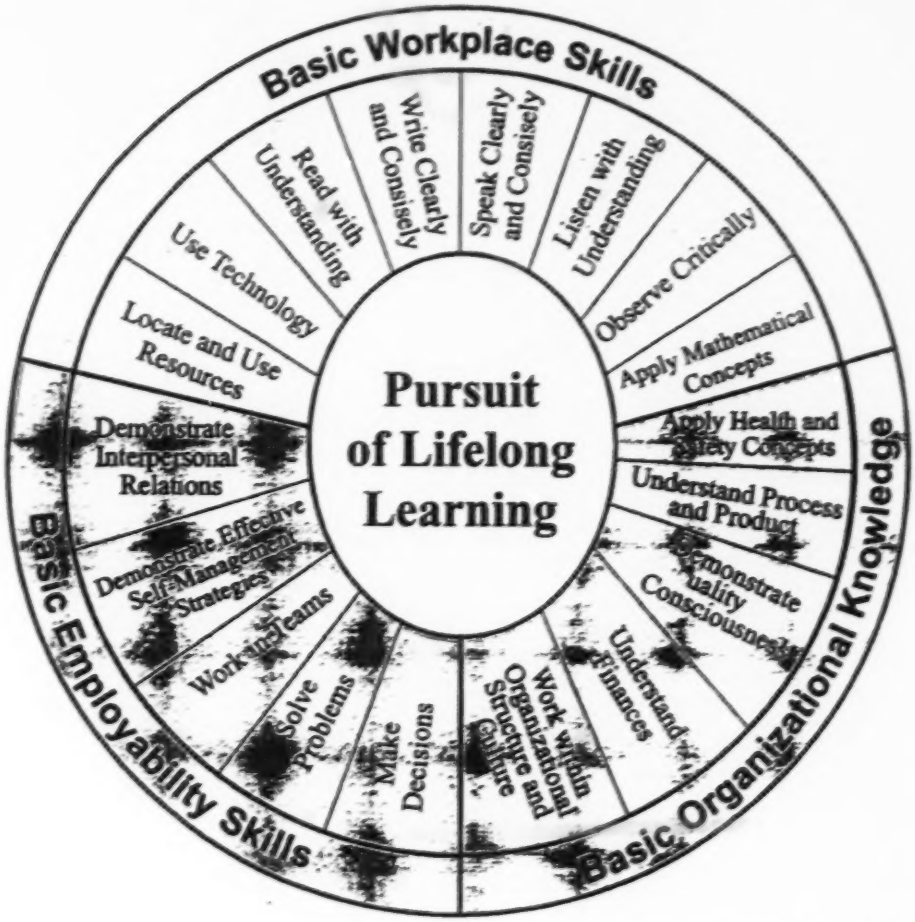
Foundation Skills Model One

This model was developed through a collaborative process involving framework project team members and the HRIC Foundation Skills Sub-Committee. The collaboration is essential to ensure that the framework project's products will be usable across the multiple agencies and partners involved in the workforce investment and that the products are aligned with PA's Unified Plan for Workforce Investment.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State
PH: 814-863-3777 FX: 814-863-6108 EM: psc3@psu.edu

WORK-BASED FOUNDATION SKILLS MODEL TWO



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This model was adapted from the National Institute for Literacy's Equipped for the Future (EFF) Standards for Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning Wheel (used with permission of the National Institute for Literacy). This model is intended to enable ABLE practitioners who pilot test the framework products, and who are familiar with the EFF Standards, to make an easy transition from the EFF standards to the Framework skills and knowledge.

Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State
PH: 814-863-3777 FX: 814-863-6108 EM: psc3@psu.edu

BEST COPY AVAILABLE